(ii) Community Information Network for Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC), being implemented by CMC Ltd.

(d) Does not arise.

कश्मीर के संबंध में अमरीकी राजदूत के विचार

549. **श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया:**
श्री कपिल सिब्बल:

क्या **प्रधान मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत में अमरीका के राजदूत श्री रिचर्ड एफ० सेलेस्टे ने हाल ही में अपना यह विचार व्यक्त किया है कि कश्मीर केवल भारत का आंतरिक मामला नहीं है बल्कि यह अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्दा भी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार ने अमरीकी राजदूत द्वारा इस प्रकार से अपना मत व्यक्त किये जाने को गम्भीरता से लिया है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो इस पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है;

(घ) क्या सरकार ने इस मत के औचित्य के सम्बन्ध में अमरीका से बात की है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो कब और इस पर उनकी क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल): (क) भारत में अमरीका के राजदूत श्री रिचर्ड सिलेस्टे को यह कहते हुए 6 अक्तूबर, 1998 की प्रेस रिपोर्ट में उद्धृत किया गया कि "हमें विश्वास है कि भारत और पाकिस्तान के मतभेदों को केवल सीधी द्विपक्षीय बातचीत द्वारा हल किया जा सकता है।" जम्मू और कश्मीर से संबंधित प्रश्न के उत्तर में उन्हें यह कहते हुए उदधृत किया गया कि "मुझे यह विश्वास नहीं है कि कोई इसे पूरी तरह से आंतरिक मामले के रूप में देखता है" और यह कि इसका क्षेत्रीय और सार्वभौमिक प्रभाव है।

(ख) से (घ) जम्मू और कश्मीर राज्य भारत संघ का अभिन्न भाग है। भारत और पाकिस्तान दोनों सभी मसलों को शिमला समझौते के अन्तर्गत द्विपक्षीय बातचीत द्वारा हल करने के लिए वचनबद्ध हैं। यह अमरीकी सरकार को दोहरा दिया गया है और हमने उपर्युक्त वक्तव्य पर स्पष्टीकरण मांगे हैं।

(ङ) 7 अक्तूबर, 1998 को नई दिल्ली स्थित अमरीकी दूतावास ने कहा कि राजदूत की टिप्पणी संदर्भ से परे उदधृत की गई थी। 9 अक्तूबर को अमरीकी स्टैट डिपार्टमेंट ने यह स्पष्ट किया कि जम्मू और कश्मीर के संबंध में अमरीकी नीति में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ है इसके अतिरिक्त यह भी कहा गया कि राजदूत की टिप्पणी अर्थगत मामला है और अमरीकी परिपेक्ष्य में महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है सरकार ने इस स्पष्टीकरणों को नोट कर लिया है।

Discussion of US President with Pakistani Premier

550. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports in the Tribune of September 10, 1998 captioned. "Clinton discusses Kashmir issue with Sharif", reporting that the US President discussed Kashmir and peace and security in South Asia, with Pak-Premier on phone and invited the latter to US, to sign CTBT;

(b) if so, what was the Pak-response to this invitation; and

(c) whether Government had reviewed the peace and security situation in South Asia in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. "The Tribune" newspaper of September 10, 1998, published remarks reportedly made by a US spokesman regarding a telephonic conversation between the US President and the Pakistan Prime Minister. The newspaper reported the White House Spokesman as having stated that the US President discussed "the economic situation in the region, non-proliferation matters, peace and security and Kashmir" with the Pakistani Prime Minister and invited the latter to the United States.

(b) The Prime Minister of Pakistan is understood to have met the US President in New York later in September 1998. It is also reported that he will be visiting

the United States in the first week of December.

(c) Government of India regularly reviews all developments which may have a bearing on India's security. Government will continue to take all measures necessary to safeguard India's national interests.

Indian help to Afghan Government

551. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Afghan Government headed by Mr. Rabbani had sought India's help to curb Pakistan's ISI activities supporting the Taliban regime;

(b) if so, in what terms such request was made and in what context Government was approached; and

(c) Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Government of Afghanistan has kept India informed of Pakistan's unabated interference in Afghanistan. They have also made it extensively known to the international community. Dr. A. Abdullah, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan during his address at the 53rd Session of the UN General Assembly on September 29, 1998, referred to an evil collusion between the Pakistani Military Intelligence Service (ISI), the Taliban and international terrorism and drug trafficking. During a hearing of the US Senate Foreign Relations Sub-Committee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs on October 8, 1998, Dr. A. Abdullah said that, apart from receiving military logistics, fuel and arms from Pakistan, more than 28,000 Pakistani citizens including paramilitary personnel and military advisers formed part of the Taliban occupation forces in various parts of Afghanistan. He also added that aircrafts from Pakistan participated in bombing Bamyan city in Afghanistan in August this year. The leaders of the Government of Afghanistan have repeatedly said that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The withdrawal of foreign military and armed personnel, political dialogue aimed at achieving a lasting political settlement of the conflict, and the formation of a fully representative, broad-based, multi-ethnic government would ensure a lasting peace in Afghanistan and the entire region. Government of India has been sending humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan both bilaterally and through the UN.

Plutonium Plant in Pakistan

552. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Indian Express of August 2, 1998, captioned "Pakistan's plutonium plant goes critical", reporting that Pakistan's transition to a plutonium producing nuclear weapons State was soon to become a reality; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction to the 50-70MW Khushab reactor having gone critical, by way of raising matching capability in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has been closely monitoring and continuously assessing the nuclear capability of Pakistan. India has a large, diversified and advanced nuclear programme geared to meeting India's developmental and security challenges. Government remains fully committed to effectively safeguarding the country's security in keeping with its assessment of the national security requirements.

Visit of US President

553. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: